

October 8, 2010

WASHINGTON, DC-Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) announced that the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and Mohawk Valley Community College are accepting applications for fully paid scholarships to cover the full cost of training through an Environmental Technician Training Program developed by MVCC.

The scholarships are funded through a \$200,000 Brownfields Job Training Grant secured by the WIB from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. About 75 scholarships will be awarded over the next two years to cover training in the program, which is designed to upgrade the skills of local workers for environmental cleanups in the city of Utica. The initial group of trainees will start the program November 1st.

The WIB has developed a pre-application form that is available on line at www.working-solutions.org
The form is also available by contacting James Lee of the WIB at (315) 507-5411 Extension 221.

Congressman Michael Arcuri, who helped secure the funding, said: "Redeveloping Brownfields is an important part of revitalizing our community. It is equally important that as we rebuild our housing and infrastructure that we provide the people who live in and around our Brownfields the chance to play a major role in restoring and renovating their neighborhoods. I was very pleased to work with the WIB, the city and the county on this project because it provides new jobs for the people of our community and new hope for the future of the city of Utica."

Mohawk Valley Community College President Randall Van Wagoner said: "MVCC's Education Center on Elizabeth Street was developed just for programs such as this, so that we can reach into the community and help use the expertise of our faculty to support efforts that are improving the neighborhoods of the city and providing new opportunities for the people we train. The curriculum MVCC developed for this project will help the people we train connect to a sector that needs workers, helping them to use MVCC as a first step to a better life. Creating a larger pool of skilled workers enhances the community's ability to undertake environmental cleanups, enhancing the quality of life in the community."

The training program will consist of nine 12-week training cycles that will include a core curriculum of 200 hours. Training will include 40-hour HAZWOPER, 10- and 30-hour OSHA health and safety training, lead and asbestos abatement, green technologies and fork lift operator training. Primary trainers will be the Mohawk Valley Community College and Oneida County Health Department. With the help of community partners, the program will recruit unemployed adults, low-income individuals working part-time, older youths, and ex-offenders living in the City of Utica. As the lead agency in the region's One-Stop Career Center system, the WIB will use its services and employer contacts to place graduates in environmental jobs.

EPA's Brownfields Job Training Program helps train people for jobs in the assessment, cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields properties, including abandoned gas stations, old textile mills, closed smelters, and other abandoned industrial and commercial properties. These investments target under-served and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods - places where environmental cleanups and new jobs are most needed. This year, EPA awarded 12 grants across the country. Since 1998, EPA has awarded more than \$33 million in brownfields job training funds. Nationally, more than 5,300 individuals have been trained through the Brownfields Job Training Grant Program, and 3,400 have been placed in full-time employment in the environmental field.